PROCESS COMMUNICATION MODEL®

It's not what you say, but the way that you say it

Developing your most valuable asset

How do we gain the edge?

Technological progress has changed the face of organisations by providing immediate access to information. Yet this technology is available for all. Our products may be exceptional, but our competitors can soon catch-up and even gain a march on us. How do we achieve an edge? The most valuable asset of any organisation is the people who work within it. High performing people can be built into high performing teams; growing our talent is by default growing the business.

The most frequent issue organisations bring to consultants is the old chestnut ‘We have a communication problem’. But when asked what is meant by this executives are often uncertain. Uncertain or not, they are correct in identifying communication as a key issue that leads to reduced efficiency, reduced motivation and consequently, reduced productivity and profit margins.

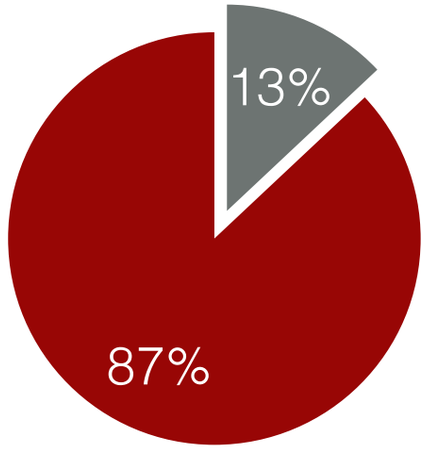
The effectiveness of an organisation is often measured by the communication between individuals, team managers and executives. Most people think this means how key data is transferred, how important decisions are made and communicated. However, what the majority are unaware of is that it is not what we say that is important, rather it is how we say what we say. The message contains two parts: firstly, the content which is naturally the essence of what we want to get across, and secondly, the how we say what we want to say is the process. Crucially, if we get the process wrong, the full impact of the message is distorted or even lost completely leading to frustration, conflict or lost business.

Therefore, the process is the HOW WE SAY IT, and it is the key to effective and efficient communications.

Problems versus investment

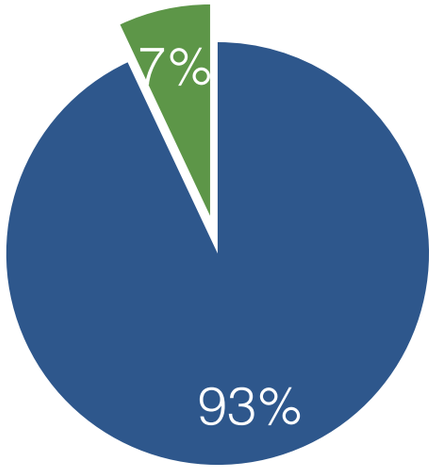
Where are most of your problems?

- Technical
- Non-Technical



Where do you spend most of your training budget?

- Technical
- People Skills



If the vast majority of problems are people issues then why is most of the training resource focused on technical skills?

This is likely to be down to the culture of development within modern society. Most of our personal development inside and outside of the corporate environment has been about developing our technical skills and knowledge: school, high school, college/university and technical on-the-job training or pre-job training. Now, how much of your own time, or those of your current team has been spent on non-technical skills development?

Is it any wonder that corporations and organisations suffer from non-technical issues?

human in the system

Why Process is so important

The psychologist who discovered the importance of process in communication was Dr Taibi Kahler. He noticed that there were ‘clusters’ of behaviours that indicated how different people communicated. He also observed that by following the second-by-second behavioural interactions, he could identify six basic key personality types, all of whom used different patterns when connecting in communication. Over time he recognised that we each have our own preferred style of opening the communication and then we have our own unique way of hearing what is being said. He had discovered the keys that unlock the how to communicate effectively; when we adapt our style to that of the other, we make a good connection and our content is heard more clearly.

As he developed the model, he recognised that whilst we all have a basic type of personality, which he called the Base type, we also had elements of all the six types within us. Hence in the Process Communication Model® (PCM®) we don’t speak of types of people, but rather ‘types in people’.

As we have all the types within us, we also have the capacity to use all six different means of communication authentically. This increases the probability that when we open communication, the other will not only hear words, but will become open to receiving the important content. Learning this simple but effective method will dramatically improve our success rate for getting our message across.

The benefit of the model does not end there. Kahler discovered a range of important aspects unique to each personality, for example every personality has a different perception of how they see their environment, how they speak about their environment and how they want others to speak to them about the environment. Each type requires us to ‘tune’ to a different frequency by using individual styles conveyed by changes in the words selected, the tone of voice, the gestures, posture and facial expression. Each type is motivated differently, each type enters distress in clearly recognisable patterns and all of this is highly predictable once you know the method.

What are the perception types within people?

PCM® does not pigeon-hole people. We have all six perceptions available to us, just that some are more accessible than others depending on whether we are getting our psychological needs met. The six personality types which reside in us all are:

Thinker: They are responsible, logical & organised, preferring to deal in logic.
Persister: They are dedicated, observant & conscientious, preferring to deal in values
Harmoniser: They are compassionate, sensitive & warm, preferring to deal in compassion
Rebel: They are spontaneous, creative & playful, preferring to deal in humour
Imaginer: They are imaginative, reflective & calm, preferring to deal in imagination
Promoter: They are adaptable, persuasive & charming, preferring to deal in charm

NASA: The origins of Process Communication Model®

Dr. Kahler began his award-winning research on interpersonal communication and behaviour in the late 1960s and, in the 1970s, developed it into what became known as the 'process model.'

In 1978, Dr. Terry McGuire, NASA's Lead Psychiatrist for Manned Spaceflight, invited Dr. Kahler to demonstrate the efficacy of his model in connection with astronaut selection. After comparing notes on several candidates, Dr. McGuire hired Dr. Kahler, commenting that 10 minutes of using his approach revealed as much or more about a candidate than a standard psychological interview of several hours.

This began an extended relationship with NASA (1978-96), during which Dr. Kahler worked with Dr. McGuire to incorporate the model into the astronaut selection, evaluation, training and management processes and during which time Dr. Kahler also translated the concepts underlying his model into behavioural terms. The predictability of PCM was essential to Dr McGuire because using it he was able to accurately predict astronaut distress in space, important in crew selection for men working under such extreme conditions.

In 1982 Dr Kahler brought the Process Communication Model® to the business world to enable organisations to offer their people tools and an approach to communication, motivation, management, and stress management in the workplace. Since then the PCM approach has successfully benefitted well over a million people around the world.

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A tool for understanding one's own and other's personalities

The Personality Inventory

People who wish to use the Process Communication Model® will first complete a questionnaire which, once processed, will enable them to discover their personality structure. The teaching metaphor of a condominium **(in the USA a name for an apartment building)** helps us to visualise the composition of each unique personality structure. Each of the six personality types is located on single floor with the size of the bar within the floor indicating the level of energy available when the person wants to use the corresponding personality type. The metaphor of an 'elevator' illustrates the person's ability to reach all of the floors and use all of their resources.

The Base

The ground floor, called the Base, indicates the dominant, most highly developed personality type. Being able to identify another's Base helps us to use the most effective communication channel and perception to connect with that person.

The Phase

The concept of Phase provides keys to understanding what motivates people. Satisfying the psychological needs of the Phase affects our motivation on a day-to-day basis and so guides us on how to motivate self and others to interact with the communicator; that might be sales, project management, HR or just social interactions.

The Process Communication Model® Profile

This personalised document of about forty pages contains valuable information for Process Communication Model® users. Each section provides keys and suggestions for optimising our everyday management by showing us what personality strengths and indicators to monitor and account for and what psychological needs we need to attend to in order to avoid being overcome by stress.

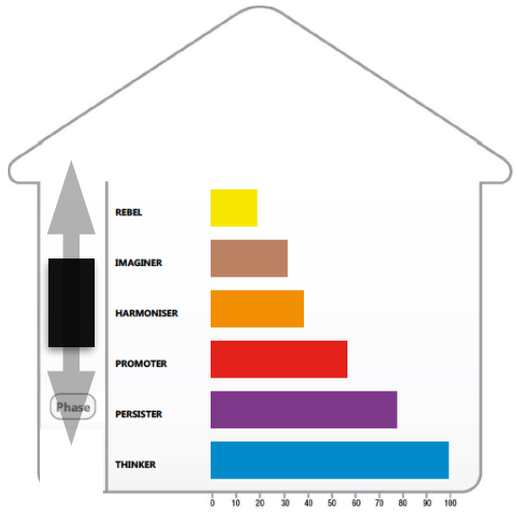
The following headings given an insight to the depth of the Process Communication Model® Profile

- Base and Phase character strengths
- Base and Phase perceptions
- Preferred communication channels
- Perceptual frames of reference
- Interactive preferences, including preferred leadership styles for managing and being managed
- Psychological needs, to ensure optimal performance when communicating
- Stress warning signs and signals of distress
- Action plan for interactions with others

Seminar Objectives

• Understanding our own personality structure in order to use all of our strengths to enable effective and high performing communication.
• Enhanced self-management in difficult situations and during inevitable periods of distress
• Accepting the personalities of others and adapting to them in order to form strong and durable working relationships as individuals and in teams

Below is an example of a personality condominium, one of 4320 possible combinations



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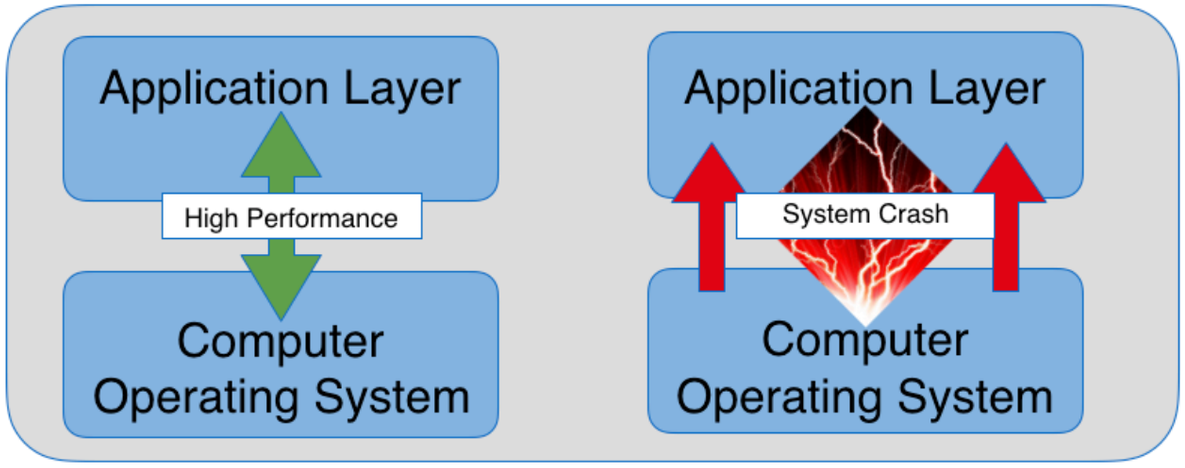
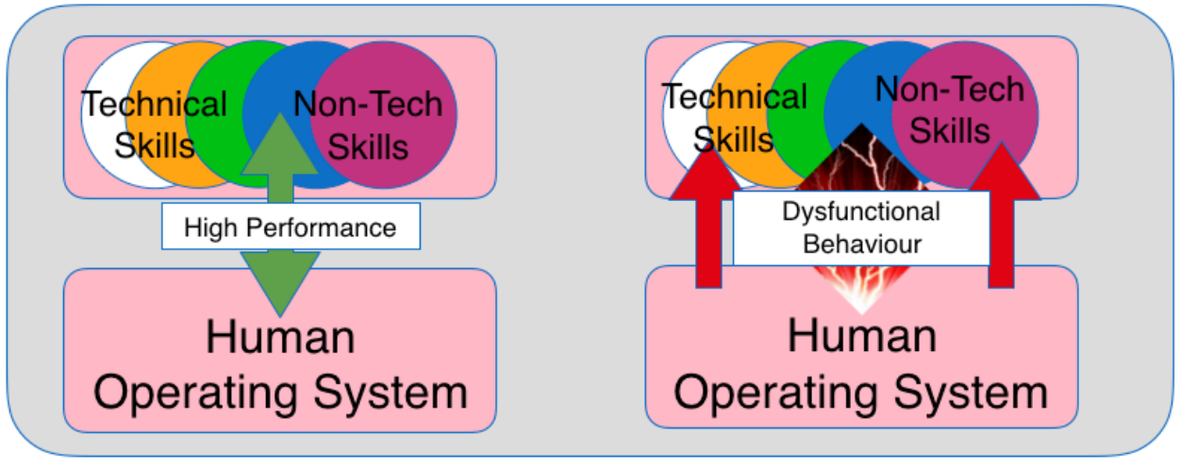
Technical Skills, Non-Technical Skills and PCM





The models above show how PCM fits into technical and non-technical skills training and why it is crucial to understand the impact PCM can have in improving performance.

In a computer, if the operating system (OS) is working well, then the applications run well. In addition, the applications have been designed to work with the OS. However, if the OS crashes, then no matter how good the applications are, they are not accessible and a reboot is often required.

Now consider the same model in terms of human performance. Technical skills make up part of the application layer (pilot, surgeon, business management, teacher, father/mother etc). We also use non-technical skills skills (decision making, situational awareness, teamwork, cooperation & communications) to maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of our role. Because PCM is the process of communication, the how we communicate, it sits at the human OS level. Therefore if the human OS crashes due to distress, then it will impact all the applications above and we will end up with dysfunctional behaviour. So no matter how good your technical and non-technical skills are, if you don't look after the Human OS, then performance will drop. PCM helps you identify the bugs in the system and gives you tools to correct them before the crash happens.

What does the language look like?

The language we speak, verbal and non-verbal, is made up of words, gestures, tones, body language and facial expressions. These attributes are influenced by our preferred perception of the world we interact with. The following shows how each of the perceptions is interpreted using the healthcare domain as an example.

Perception of Emotions (said softly) “I always feel good when I see a patient who has been very sick recover fully and leave the hospital. I feel especially happy when they thank me for taking such good care of them.”

Perception of Thoughts (said in a matter-of-fact tone) “In one case the doctor used 37 stitches to close a wound. The patient was bleeding profusely and had lost four pints of blood.”

Perception of Opinions (said in a matter-of-fact tone) “I believe the doctor did an excellent job working with the patient. In my opinion we have one of the finest emergency room staffs in the state. I also believe that he is one of the finest emergency room doctors in the country.”

Perception of Reactions (said energetically) “I don’t like it when people say we don’t care about our patients and I hate it when they complain about having to wait when we take a critical patient ahead of them.”

Perception of Action (said rapidly) “When they bring a critical patient in, we swing into action. We diagnose the problem and immediately do whatever we have to do to stabilize the patient and give them the best possible care.”

Perception of Inaction (said slowly) “After we stabilize the patient, we transfer them to one of the wards or the operating room. Then we can relax a minute and reflect on what we just accomplished. Then we focus on the next patient.”

Case Study - Distressed communication in the operating theatre

A stressful situation occurs with an experienced vascular surgery consultant of a large university hospital. Despite his high surgical aptitude and his usual, charming and courteous manner, he appears stressed to colleagues and expresses himself rather argumentatively. Through his "unpredictable" behaviour, his way of putting others under pressure, and the derogatory utterances, he is feared by the other staff, and everyone (including his colleagues) avoids working with him - where possible. Most of the problems arise when he has to wait for something or someone else does not act quickly enough. With phrases such as *“Get on with it”, “Hurry up!”, “This can’t wait!”* he puts others under pressures, breaks rules and all refuses to accept responsibility for any mistakes. Particularly when in the operating theatre, where emergencies can create large amounts of stress, this additional stress factor caused by the senior physician is counter-productive and reinforces distress among others. Experienced nursing staff express this as *“My God, he makes me so nervous I can’t find anything on my instrument table.”*

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The many applications of the Process Communication Model®

The Process Communication Model® offers a wealth of wide ranging tools to develop a variety of competencies within your organisation or corporate environment. The strength of this approach lies in the originality of the model's components, which enable you to adjust your training investment to match corporate strategy and your employees' needs.

> **Management** - Achieving excellence

> **Sales relations** - Taking performance to the next level

> **Team building** - Developing functional & competitive teams

> **Team cohesion** - Strengthening the bonds of cooperation

> **Individual coaching** - Raising awareness and fulfilling potential

> **Team coaching** - Maximising on the talents in the team

> **Conflict management** - Relieving tensions by managing conflict

> **An aid during Recruitment** - Making enlightened choices

> **Staff Retention** - Developing & motivating employees

> **Internal trainers** - Efficiently transmitting competencies

Success in AVIKO, Germany using PCM

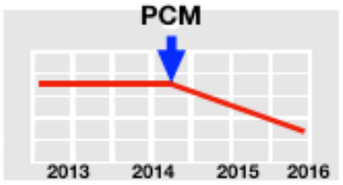
Positive Impact on Management

40% time savings in meetings

Created can-do attitude

Improved productivity

Positive Impact on Human Resources



Sick days reduced from 6.5 to 2.4 per year

Employee turnover reduced to almost zero

Production errors reduced by 45%

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Do you want more information about PCM?

Find out how to add value to you and your business

Improve your company's bottom line? Make that call now

Take some time to reflect on the content. Email tomorrow?

Go on, you know you want to find out more about PCM

Speak to the human on the other end of this email

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